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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT Friday, February 28, 1941.

Subject: "CHANGING FOOD HABITS". Information from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

I know an old gentleman who likes to talk to me about the "good old days"--the days when he was a boy. Those were the days he says-- and he'd like to go back to them. He doesn't hold with what he calls a lot of our newfangled ideas today.

One of our newfangled ideas that he's especially against is all this "to do" as he calls it, that we make about eating the right kind of food. When he was a boy, he says, people ate what they wanted and they got along a whole lot better than we do today. . . .with all our talk about vitamins and minerals and protein, and such.

Well, I doubt it. But vital statistics don't go far back enough for me to prove anything. All I can say is that I've seen many a case of vitamin deficiency staring at me out of many a family album.

However, I came across a release the other day that indicates that neither the old gentleman nor I are all in right--or all in wrong. Dr. Louise Stanley of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Home Economics tells how some of our food habits have changed since Great Grandpa's day. But let me quote Doctor Stanley directly.

"Both for the better and for the worse," she says, "the food habits of the people of this country have changed markedly in the past few generations.

"Today, we eat fewer natural and more processed and fabricated foods than we did before. Today we have a far greater variety of foods available. Tastes have changed. And there is much less difference than before in the foods eaten in different parts of the country--or from season to season.

"From the nutritional standpoint," said Doctor Stanley, "one of the most encouraging trends over the past 50 years, is the sharp increase in the amount of milk, tomatoes, citrus fruits, and leafy green vegetables that we eat.

"All these foods are included on our 'protective' food list. That is they are foods noted for certain mineral elements and vitamins in which diets are likely to fall short."

An how here is what Doctor Stanley says--that backs up some of the things that the old gentleman has to say about our eating habits today.

On the debit side of the nutrition ledger, Doctor Stanley places some of our developed food preferences. She says--

"A modern standard of fastidiousness has led many of us to use the lean-muscle cuts of meat to the neglect of the organs of animals. An association of goodness with richness in fat has led us to overlook the values of skim milk. And, though skim milk lacks the fat in whole milk, it is as rich in protein and in much-needed calcium as is whole milk.

"Also, some food processing practices, such as a high degree of milling of wheat--refining of cane sugar, and bleaching of vegetables have stripped natural products of certain nutritive qualities. Because we have come to associate whiteness with goodness, we often eat these foods to the exclusion of others."

Well, it would seem from what Doctor Stanley says that bad food choices tend to offset the benefits we get from the greater amount of protective foods that we eat. And we do know that diets as they stand today are often short in calcium and in some of the vitamins.

Or to put it in Doctor Stanley's words: "Many of the nation's food habits could still be reshaped with an eye to nutritional improvement."

Your own personal food habits may or may not need reshaping. But if you'd like to check to make sure--let me remind you again of a list of foods that an

average adult needs every day. You may remember my reading this list before. It's from "Eat the Right Food" --a leaflet recently put out by the Bureau of Home Economics.

First, you need milk in your diet--at least 1 pint or more every day in some form or other.

Next,you need at least four servings of fruits and vegetables every day. And here's the kind they should be.

You need at least 1 serving every day of a leafy green vegetable or a yellow vegetable. That would be lettuce, turnip greens, spinach, carrots, or squash -- in fact any very green or any very yellow vegetable.

You should have another serving every day of a fruit or vegetable that's rich in vitamin C. Some of these are tomatoes, oranges, grapefruit, and raw cabbage.

You'll also need two more servings at least of other fruits and vegetables. One of these will probably be potatoes.

Next, check on eggs. It's best to get 1 egg a day if you can. If not, get at least 3 or 4 eggs a week.

Let's see, so far we've checked milk, fruits, and vegetables, and eggs. That leaves five other items--meat, cereals, fats, sweets, and water.

You'll need 1 serving or more of lean meat, poultry, or fish every day. Try to get at least 2 servings of whole-grain cereals products every day. Use some fats and sweets--enough to satisfy your appetite. And, finally, drink at least 6 glasses of water every day.

That finishes up the check list from the Bureau of Home Economics. If you checked your own food habits with this list as I went along--you have already found the answer to whether or not your own food habits could stand improving.

If you don't already have a copy of "Eat the Right Food"--you can get a copy by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Single copies are free.